



Delaware State Arts Council Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2013
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Arden Gild Hall, Ardentown, DE

Attending: Council: Lise Monty (Chair), Tina Betz, Lou Braithwaite, Joann Browning, Lori Crawford, Robert Fitzgerald, Richard Givens, Margaret Johnson, Ralph Kuebler, Gail Lear, Heather Morrissey, Jon Newsom, Carol Rothschild, John Sarro, Mack Wathen

Staff: Paul Weagraff, Terry Plummer, Sheila Ross, Kristin Pleasanton, Dana Wise, Gwen Henderson

Public: Steve Cohen, Ron Ozer – Arden Gild

Absent: Cathy Walls, Erica Lokai, Bruce Decker, Roxanne Stanulis

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes were approved from the September 18, 2013 Council meeting.

Chair's Report

Ms. Monty attended the NASAA Conference for executive directors and arts council chairs in October in Jackson, WY. It was a very good and intensive conference. One session that was particularly enriching was presented by the Theater Bay Area Project in San Francisco who did a 2-year project and published a book entitled *Counting New Beans... The Intrinsic Impact on the Value of Art*. The whole idea as the author said is that we've gotten very good at measuring the financial impact of arts. But we need to be aware of the intrinsic impact of it, making sure we get across the true value of art. It was very interesting to show how the study was conducted because it's hard to measure the intrinsic impact of something. Their surveys asked people how they felt about the presentations. Another goal they tried to achieve was to educate the people before the performance and then ask 'what emotions were you feeling when you left the event?' It's a very good book and if anyone wants to read it. Monty offered to pass along her copy. Monty thanked all the staff on the great job they did on the arts summit and congratulated Kristin Pleasanton on her new position as Deputy Director of the Division.

Director's Report

Update on Council Nominations

Upcoming terms expiring:

- 1st term: Lori Crawford (Jan. 2014); Ralph Kuebler (Mar. 2014); Jon Newsom (Mar. 2014); John Sarro (Jan. 2014).
- 2nd term: Gail Lear (Jan. 2014).

Paul Weagraff encouraged all Council members, "if you know of anybody particularly from Kent & Sussex Counties, that would make good candidates, see if this would be of interest to them and if so, we'll have them complete a nomination form." Weagraff offered to email the link to the nomination form to council members as well as the sheet on council responsibilities to pass on to interested people.

Personnel

Kristin Pleasanton has been appointed as the new Deputy Director, effective November 1, 2013.

The Planner position vacated by Kristin's promotion will be posted shortly and interviews will take place early in 2014. The goal is to have someone in place by the beginning of our new grant cycle in March.

Also joining the Division on a contractual basis are Erica Lokai (National Arts Project and Visual Images Registry) and Bruce Decker (Mezzanine Gallery).

Applications

The Division posted FY2015 eGrant applications on December 9th, actually ahead of the schedule the Division had set for itself. Notice went out to all FY2013 and FY2014 applicants. Weagraff gave retired Deputy Director Susan Salkin tremendous credit for making this year's process incredibly easy. She did so much homework, planning and foresight in implementing for this year's procedure. A notice is posted on the Division's home page, and an article has been included in the next Arts E-newsletter. The Division also sent out an email notification to all grantee contacts from 2013 and 2014.

The application for the FY2015 fiscal year is due March 3, 2014 at 4:30 pm, due to March 1 falling on a weekend.

Events

Arts Summit Re-cap – Kristin Pleasanton

Thanks to all the council members who came and helped out with introductions, greetings and directions. We had 230 attendees. Attendance was pretty much sold out...we filled the rooms. There were only 10 less attendees from last Summit. Richard Blanco, President Obama's inaugural poet, was the keynote. We had two performances, seven workshop presenters, and all disciplines were represented in the presentations.

Survey highlights: Favorites – Richard Blanco; Xiang Gao & 6wire Project and the dancer; Jazz performance by Fostina Dixon; Book-signing by Richard Blanco (his books were sold out); Networking.

Negative feedback: Food service at lunch; some people complained about lack of handouts at the workshops (Division offered to email handouts upon request after the Summit)

Projects

Roxanne Stanulis is working with Government Information Center and Zero Defect Design on an app that utilizes Delaware Scene data for locating events on mobile devices.

The newly designed Artist Roster (www.delaware.gov/artistroster/) is active, with the intent to build the number of artists represented in the roster. Currently there are nearly 60 artists and organizations represented. Weagraff invited Council to take a look to give the Division feedback on the Artist Roster.

March for the Arts in Education – planning with Department of Education and Delaware Arts Alliance to present a low-cost, grassroots presentation on the impact the arts have on students, directly from the parents and students. Sheila Ross is working on collecting testimonials.

Schwartz Center for the Arts is working with DE Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) to conduct a community assessment and develop a board restructuring proposal, with support from the Division and Department of State.

Wilmington Creative District initiative is moving forward with a Steering committee and subcommittees to explore the establishment of a Creative District adjacent to downtown Wilmington (Market St. to Washington St. and 2nd to 9th streets)

For your calendar

February 25, 2014	Poetry Out Loud finals – Smyrna Opera House (Snow date 2/26)
Feb 24 - March 17, 2014	National Arts Program – State Employee Art Exhibition
	DSU Art Gallery (Reception on Sat. March 8, 2–4 pm)
March 26, 2014	DSAC quarterly meeting – Kent County, TBD
June 18, 2014	DSAC quarterly meeting – New Castle County, Buena Vista

Funding Updates

Weagraff was approached about financial distress that two arts organizations are having, wanting to know if the Division had emergency funds for cash-flow issues. Andrew Dinsmore a representative from Senator Coons' office said he was approached by one of the major arts organizations as well which allowed Weagraff the opportunity to have a conversation with him on how all of the Delaware arts organizations play a role in our economic impact, education, and quality of life. And it gave him a chance to remind Dinsmore that Senator Coons' support for National Endowment for the Arts is extremely important to the Division because a significant portion of the budget then goes to support these organizations which support programming and jobs.

From NASAA notes (Isaac Brown):

“Yesterday (December 12), the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly (332-94) to approve a framework that hopefully will prevent another government shutdown while providing some relief from the automatic spending reductions known as sequestration. The bill now goes to the Senate, where it is expected to face stronger opposition, for consideration on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Though the bill is not a formal budget for fiscal year 2014, its passage is an important step for Congress because it sets caps on discretionary spending at \$1.012 trillion for the current fiscal year. Disagreement over this cap had stalled the budget process, with House Republican leadership calling for the cap to be around \$967 billion and Senate Democratic leadership calling for a figure near \$1.058 trillion.

In addition to setting a budget cap, the bill provides relief from the sequester that would have reduced federal spending by about \$85 billion this year. The legislation calls for a \$45-billion reduction in the sequester for FY2014, to be split evenly between domestic discretionary and defense programs. The House's decision to reduce the sequester for FY2014 is significant because it means there will be less pressure on Congress to slash funding for federal agencies.

Delaware Division of the

Once the budget spending cap is established, members of the House and Senate can negotiate a formal budget for the remainder of FY2014. They must do so before January 15, when funding for the federal government is set to expire. *It is during this later process that funding levels for all federal agencies, including the National Endowment for the Arts, will be established."*

The Secretary of State has submitted a level-funding proposal for the Governor's FY2015 budget. This sustains level funding for the newly established Delaware Arts Trust Fund.

Thanks to Steve Cohen and Ron Ozer for allowing the Council the use of Arden Gild Hall for the December meeting.

Steve Cohen – Arden Club President

Thanks to the Arts Council for your funding support to the Arden Club. The Division of the Arts funding helps bring in artists that normally wouldn't be seen on stage in Delaware. Mr. Cohen is the president of the Arden Club which is the overall non-profit organization for the various gilds. He gave a history of Arden (community is over 113 years old) and an overview of their activities and offered to give a tour of the facilities. The Arden Club allows any group of people 10-15 or more to request forming a gild to do something of interest to them and use the Gild Hall as their home. The Arden Club includes the Performing Arts Gild, Arden Singers, Shakespeare Gild, the Young Actors Workshop, Folk-dancing, Dinner Gild, Library Gild, Swimming Gild, Poetry Gild, Scholars Gild, and the Gardeners Gild, which is the oldest gild. They host the Arden Fair annually. Arden Club membership is \$20 for a year. The Arden Club is very active in fund-raising, and they are very cost-efficient, relying heavily on volunteers.

Ron Ozer – Concert Gild Director

Arden Concert Gild tries to utilize every one they can to spread the word about the concerts (they don't have much of an advertising budget). The concert gild started in 1997. Ozer joined in 2002 when they began the gild. They grew from 2-3 shows a year to 15-17 shows. They're all volunteers. The Division supports the Concert Gild with project support and opportunity grants. They've brought in bands from India, Eastern Europe, Africa and a lot of different world acts and Jazz groups that they might not be able to consider otherwise. They have a large following through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The Queen and the Grand help promote their shows. They have good connections with the press. Recently they tapped a group of Public Relations students from Drexel University to take on the Arden Club as a project for this past semester. They provided a lot of ideas on how to raise their profile in the region and they've already started to explore some of those ideas to build things. Bands come here and are treated as honored guests, not just people for hire. Their audience is only about 15%-20% club members and about 80% come from surrounding areas. They have people contacting them from hundreds of miles around to come to their venue. They draw club members from a four-state area. Any and everybody is welcome to come to the events. The Gild had the PBS station come and film a recent concert and they raved about the light show among other things. They've had several famous people here over the years.

Lunch Break – 12 noon

Kristin Pleasanton – Fellowships

Overview of Fellowship process – August 1st is the deadline for online applications, all artists of all disciplines from Delaware are welcome to apply. Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation (MAAF) supplies the Division with people to select for jurors and they are paid a fee. The Division sends off the work samples and applications to jurors throughout the country, after selecting one juror per discipline. The jurors score all the applications from 1 to 5, 5 being the best score to get. They also write comments and critiques

they share with Division staff and a special page to share with the applicants if they want to see the comments. The Division gets results back from all categories and try to award fellowships for the top score in each category at the emerging level and the established level, as long as there are sufficient funds. This year the Masters category was in the visual arts, with a \$10,000 award. This year the Division received 115 applications, 25 more than last year. Staff reviewed jurors recommendations and present a slate 16 candidates to the Council, all of whom were the top scorers based on the jurors' recommendations: 11 from New Castle County; 2 from Kent County; 3 from Sussex County. The total amount recommended for emerging and established categories is \$69,000. The judges/jurors get a work sample and the artist's statement that the artist wrote about their work. They're only judging on the quality of the work on its own. All fellowship recipients are required to have one public exhibit or performance in Delaware during the fellowship year.

A Council member inquired about how candidates can use their award money. Pleasanton replied: They are required to spend all the money in the fellowship year; they must keep track of it and send a final report to the Division; they can use it for expenses related to their art such as: renting studio space, purchasing equipment and supplies, attending workshops, and they can take time off from their regular job to focus on their art. The only thing they can't use it for is international travel. They can travel anywhere within the United States.

Motion to approve them all as a group. All in favor. None opposed.

The honorable mentions are the applicants who had the next highest score after the winner in their categories. The Division gives them recognition...there's no monetary award for honorable mention.

Winners at the emerging level have to wait 3 years before they can come back and apply at the established level. If they win at the established level, they have to wait 7 years before they can apply at the Master's level.

The Division can only give one award at the Masters level each year, and the category rotates among the three disciplines (visual, music, literary). This year is for visual.

For the Masters category this year, the Division took the top 3 scorers out of the 10 master level applicants. The jurors only review the artistic quality of the Masters candidates' work. The jurors' decision on artistic quality is final. They were: Ken Mabrey, Alexi Natchev and Carson Zullinger.

Master candidates were also asked to submit a one-page narrative and their resume. Council members were asked prior to the meeting to review the artists' CVs, resumes, and community engagement statements about contributions to Delaware, the region, and beyond. They were then asked to rank them, based on their community contributions. Council's decision is to be based on what they've done in their field, what they've done in Delaware and their contributions to the national scene in their art form.

Preliminary scoring ranked them in the following order: 1st place: Zullinger; 2nd place: Mabrey; and 3rd place: Natchev.

Zullinger also had the highest number of 1st place rankings. Council concurred on the results of the preliminary rankings.

One Council member asked if there was any cause for concern, noting that Zullinger had recently served on the Council. They agreed this was an important discussion to have. The Council concluded that he should not be penalized for giving his time over several years to the council, during which time he was not eligible to apply.

Motion to approve Carson Zullinger as the Masters Fellowship recipient. All in favor. None opposed.

Proposals by Division of the Arts Staff to Delaware State Arts Council, December 18, 2013

Proposal 1: Staff review of smallest arts organizations (budgets under \$25,000) and projects (requests under \$2,500)

Rationale:

- **GOS recipients** (arts organizations) with budgets under \$25,000 represent 24% of the applicants and 1.1% of GOS grant awards in FY2014
 - Internal review of smallest organizations would more readily accommodate a three-year review of GOS applicants with 1/3 reviewed annually by one GOS panel (see Proposal #2)
 - Internal review streamlines the process for review of smallest organizations that have minimal impact on the grants budget
 - Total impact on staff time managing panel review process is significantly reduced, thereby allowing more staff time for other program initiatives
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- **Projects** requesting less than \$2,500 represent 25% of the applicants and 6% of the PS grant awards in FY2014
 - Internal review of smallest organizations would relieve pressure of one panel to review an excessive number of applicants or require the Division to expand to two project support panels annually
 - Internal review streamlines the process for review of smallest projects that have minimal impact on the grants budget
 - Total impact on staff time managing panel review process is significantly reduced, thereby allowing more staff time for other program initiatives

Council's additional recommendations:

- *A subcommittee of Council members be included in the review of smaller organizations and/or requests when additional review was warranted (problematic applications or unusual projects/requests).*
- *Council receive a copy of project descriptions and staff comments on the internally-reviewed applications prior to the June Council meeting, to accompany comments of the panel-reviewed applications.*

Motion to approve Proposal 1 with council recommendations. Seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

Proposal 2: Extend General Operating Support application cycle from two to three years with interim reporting in "off years"

Rationale:

- Historically, more than 95% of arts organizations receive funding annually from the Division of the Arts, regardless of annual or biennial review of full applications
- "Off year" interim reports would keep Division and Council updated on arts organizations' financial position and any significant changes in programming and/or operations
- New organizations could be introduced into the full application cycle after completion of the StartUp program in any given year, rather than having to wait for the next full application cycle
- Time completing applications would be reduced for arts organizations without reducing accountability for financial reporting or Division oversight
- Secretary of State has encouraged a more effective use of staff time, specifically, a reduction of time taken to manage the arts organization panel review process, thereby allowing more staff time for other program activities and responsibilities

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- Proposed break-down for panels in alternating years (schedule subject to modification)
 - Year 1: Arts organizations with budgets between \$25,000 and \$70,000; plus one third of smallest organizations (under \$25,000) reviewed internally
 - Year 2: Arts organizations with budgets between \$70,000 and \$650,000; plus one third of smallest organizations (under \$25,000) reviewed internally
 - Year 3: Arts organizations receiving DE Arts Trust Funds as part of their General Operating Support grant (annual budgets over \$650,000); plus one third of smallest organizations (under \$25,000) reviewed internally

Motion to approve Proposal 2. Seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

Old Business – none

New Business – none

Public Comment - None

Motion and second to adjourn meeting at 2 p.m. All in Favor.

Council took a tour of Arden Gild Hall, led by Steve Cohen.